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# Maine.gov Style Guide

This Style Guide has been created by InforME to accompany Maine's new state agency website templates, as part of the State's Website Consistency Initiative. This document provides the detailed specifications of Maine's new state agency website templates and instructions for using them.

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## Introduction

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Maine's state agency website templates were designed by InforME at the request of the State. These templates will provide a consistent layout and style across the entire Maine.gov enterprise, as well as a professional, user-friendly, and accessible design for agencies. The templates were designed to accommodate a variety of site types and to allow agency identity and branding. The templates and related files are available for webmasters to download in the online Template Kit at [www.maine.gov/webmasters/templates/](http://www.maine.gov/webmasters/templates/).

### ***The Template Kit***

The downloadable Kit includes the following:

- HTML home page
- HTML first-level inner page
- HTML second-level page
- HTML third-level page
- Style Sheets (CSS)
- Images (sample header images)
- Data table example

## Why Design Standards?

---

The Web is now one of the most important means by which the State communicates with the public. Often an agency's website is the only interface that a citizen or business has with a particular agency. As website usage by the public continues to grow, it is critical that Maine's state websites present a professional, user-friendly, integrated portal to state information and services. All state websites must be accessible to the broadest possible audience and easy to understand and use.

The State's current Internet presence consists of numerous individual agency sites that vary enormously in layout, navigation, style, and usability. The efforts of many agencies are commendable, but without coordination and standards, the customer experience is often fragmented and confusing. Maintaining standards for consistent website design across the enterprise is necessary to meet the needs of the public and to provide the best possible electronic services.

Web design standards support the State's goals for user-friendly, professional quality, and accessible state websites. The new templates have been professionally designed to meet current industry standards for browser compatibility and accessibility, and will provide a consistent look, layout, and style across state government. Consistency is an important element of website usability. Web users become accustomed to common design conventions, and consistent design throughout the enterprise means easier navigation for users. Instead of spending time learning how to use each new agency site as they move from one page to another, users quickly learn the enterprise design and are able to focus on the site content and locate the information they need quickly.

Jakob Nielsen, the well-known web usability specialist, summarizes the purpose of standards very well:

"Standards ensure that users:

- Know what features to expect
- Know how these features will look in the interface

- Know where to find these features on the site and on the page
- Know how to operate each feature to achieve their goal
- Don't have to ponder the meaning of unknown design elements
- Don't miss important features because they overlook a non-standard design element
- Don't get nasty surprises when something doesn't work as expected

These benefits increase users' sense of mastery over the website, increase their ability to get things done, and increase their overall satisfaction with the experience."

(September 13, 2004 Alertbox, <http://useit.com/alertbox/20040913.html>):

The web templates and standards facilitate the State's website goals in the following ways:

- **Positive User Experience.** The templates incorporate usability best practices and common navigation conventions to provide users with a positive online experience. As more sites implement the templates, users will be able to learn and count on these conventions as they move from one agency's site to another, making their visits to Maine.gov easier and more productive.
- **Accessibility.** The templates are built using standard XHTML code and cascading style sheets (CSS), and incorporate best practices for accessible coding and presentation. This enables every agency to provide a site that meets industry and state standards and is accessible to the broadest audience possible, including users with disabilities.
- **Strong Maine.gov Identity.** The templates support the Maine.gov identity and branding through a consistent layout, "look", and color palette. It is important for users to know when they are viewing a State of Maine web page, and a consistent look and feel helps them to know immediately. A range of color schemes and customized agency headers and content areas provide a level of design flexibility while remaining within consistent Maine.gov guidelines.
- **Ease of Development.** The templates are built using standard XHTML code and cascading style sheets (CSS). Text-based navigation and few graphics mean that individuals with a working knowledge of HTML and Dreamweaver or Contribute can create, manage, and update sites in a timely and efficient manner. The templates also speed development of new sites by reducing the design time required, allowing agency staff to focus on site content rather than design.

### Summary of Benefits of the Agency Templates

- Improved usability for the public
- Improved accessibility for all users
- Consistent branding of state sites
- Improved browser compatibility, clean code, fast download, better search engine readability
- Easier development and maintenance by agencies
- Every agency, big or small, will have access to professional design templates
- Redundancy, backup, and support – everyone is working with the same code and the same standards. This makes it much easier for webmasters to assist each other or for a new person to take over an existing site.

#### Resource:

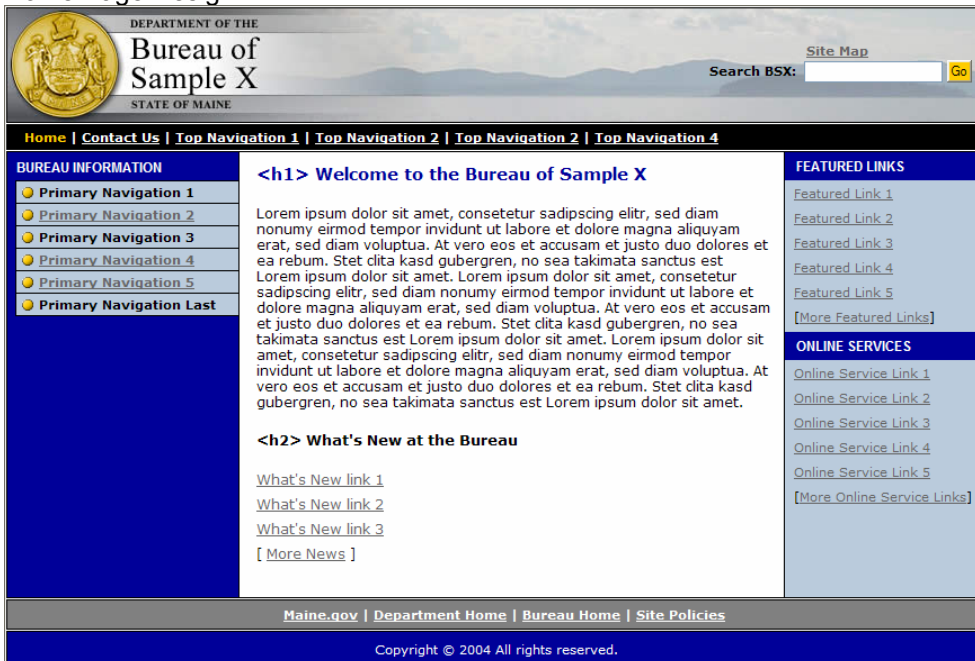
Argument for Standards, Government Technology Magazine, February 2004, by Chris O'Kennon  
<http://www.govtech.net/magazine/story.php?id=88080>.

## Design Overview

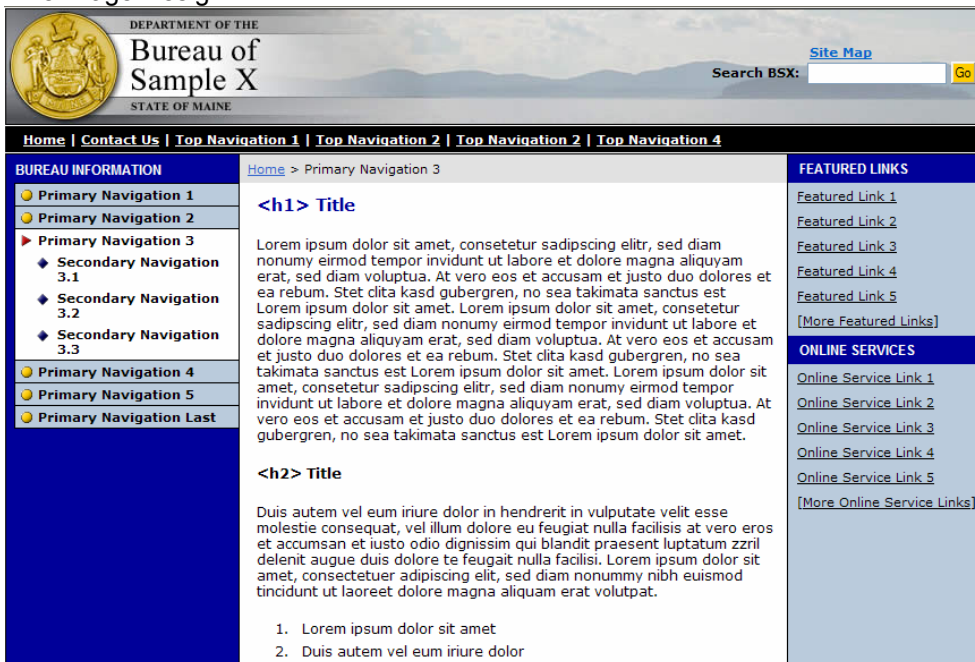
---

Below are images of the designs, showing a sample agency.

## Home Page Design



## Inner Page Design



## Code Overview

The templates are built using industry-standard XHTML 1.0 code and cascading style sheets (CSS). The code for each page is very simple, using minimal layout tables and relying on CSS for all styling of colors, fonts, and navigation. The templates use only 1-2 images (in the header area). Most of the visual design is accomplished through CSS. Navigation is all text-based rather than graphics, in order to make developing and updating sites easier and to enhance accessibility to the disabled.

The templates' XHTML code includes comment tags and section "id"s to indicate various sections within the code, such as where a particular page element begins and ends.

## About XHTML

XHTML is almost identical to HTML 4.01, but it's more strict and clean. XHTML works with browsers and other user agents that support HTML 4, as well as those that support XML. So you can switch to XHTML without excluding anyone or waiting for XML user agents to become more prevalent. Because XHTML is so similar to HTML, it's not difficult to switch from HTML to XHTML.

Please note the following differences:

- All tags must be lowercase. Use `<h1>` not `<H1>`, `<td>` not `<TD>`, etc.
- All tags must be closed. For example, a paragraph beginning with the `<p>` tag must have a closing `</p>` tag. "Empty" elements (those that do not have a separate closing tag) must also be closed, by adding a space and closing slash to the tag. This includes horizontal rules (`<hr />`), line breaks (`<br />`), and image tags (``).
- Tags must be properly nested. For example:  
Incorrect: `<p><strong>This is important</p></strong>`  
Correct: `<p><strong>This is important</strong></p>`
- Use quotes around all values. For example:  
Incorrect: `height=55`  
Correct: `height="55"`

***Dreamweaver can do all of this for you***, if you update your settings to XHTML (see below). The templates already include the correct XHTML DOCTYPE as the first line of code and all template code has been tested and validated against the XHTML standard. You can use a code validator to ensure that your pages are coded correctly after adding content.

## Using Dreamweaver to Create XHTML

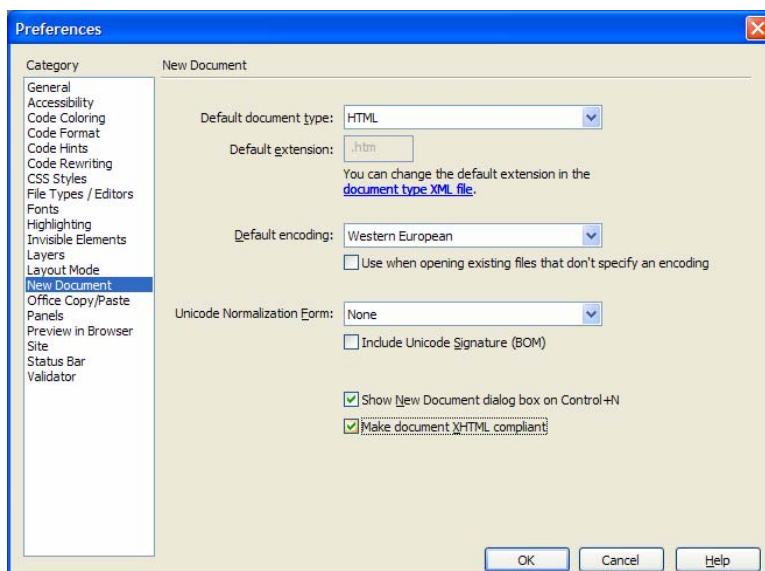
Dreamweaver MX generates XHTML code, and cleans up existing XHTML code, in a way that meets many of the XHTML requirements automatically.

### Making documents XHTML compliant in Dreamweaver MX and MX2004

You will need to edit your Preferences in Dreamweaver and make sure that XHTML is enabled.

To create XHTML-compliant documents by default:

1. Choose Edit > Preferences (Windows) or Dreamweaver > Preferences (Mac OS X) and select the New Document category.
2. In the New Document category, select the Make Document XHTML Compliant option.
3. Click OK.



To make an existing HTML document XHTML compliant:

1. Open a document.
2. Choose File > Convert > XHTML.

**Note:** You can't convert a page based on a template unless you first convert the template. Pages based on templates must be in the same language as the template on which they are based.

## Resource

### *Coding Standards Using XHTML*

Dreamweaver Developer Center Article by Dan Short

[http://www.macromedia.com/devnet/mx/dreamweaver/articles/code\\_standards.html](http://www.macromedia.com/devnet/mx/dreamweaver/articles/code_standards.html)

A review of how Dreamweaver MX implements coding standards such as XHTML, CSS, and validation.

## Benefits of XHTML

Generally, using XHTML lets you realize the benefits of XML, while ensuring the backward and future compatibility of your web documents. Following are some specific reasons to use XHTML:

- **Ease the transition to more advanced technology**  
The web is moving to XML, a powerfully enabling technology. Writing well-formed, valid XHTML pages is the easiest way to begin this transition.
- **Cleaner, more logical markup**  
XHTML brings uniformity to document structure. The rules of XHTML help maintain the structural integrity of web pages, such as correct headings, markup, and use of style sheets.
- **Increased compatibility with new devices**  
Unlike old-style HTML pages, valid, well-formed XHTML documents can easily be compatible with wireless devices, Braille readers and other specialized web environments. Moreover, XHTML's insistence on clean, rule-based markup helps us avoid the kind of errors that can make web pages fail even in traditional browsers like Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator.
- **Greater accessibility**  
Because they follow strict rules and avoid non-standard markup, well-authored XHTML pages are more accessible than old-school HTML pages.

## Usability

The design of the templates is based on usability research and established web design best practices.

The following features will enhance ease of use:

- Consistent layout, look, and placement of navigation elements
- Search and site map available from every page
- Home link and “Contact Us” link available from every page
- Breadcrumb trail navigation on inner pages indicates user location and provides alternative navigation options
- Navigation systems include clear “you are here” indicators as the user moves deeper into the site.
- Fast download of pages. Using CSS and XHTML reduces page load time dramatically.
- Greater browser compatibility. The templates have been thoroughly tested for browser compatibility.

## Accessibility

The templates have many built-in features to enhance accessibility to the disabled, including:

- **“Skip navigation” links (required by federal Section 508)**  
These “invisible” links allow a blind user with screen reader software to skip over repetitive header and navigation links and move directly to the page’s main content.
- **Text navigation**  
Very few graphics are used in the templates. All navigation is text. This is more accessible than graphical text, since it can be enlarged as needed.
- **Site map**  
A textual site map provides an alternative navigation system and is helpful for some disabled users.
- **CSS**  
Correct use of CSS to separate presentation from content allows users to control the site display to their own preferred settings, and provides a cleaner page that is more accessible to screen reader software, text browsers, and alternative devices.
- **Font sizing**  
Accessibility policy requires that sites use relative font sizing. This means that font sizes are relative to the user’s selected base font size and can be enlarged or reduced by the user. We have provided effective font sizing within the style sheets that meets all accessibility requirements and is cross-browser compatible.

## About the CSS

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The templates use cascading style sheets (CSS) to control the majority of the look and feel of the design, including background colors, margins and spacing, navigation styling, font type and size, link styling, and more. This separation of content from presentation makes maintaining a consistent design much easier. You don’t need to worry about controlling your fonts paragraph by paragraph or whether your CSS will be cross-browser compatible. If you want to change the color scheme of your site, you can do it by changing one line in one file, and voila! Every page on your site will display the new color scheme. (However, this would be jarring for users, so we recommend choosing one color scheme and sticking to it.) Similarly, this also means that future design updates will be easier to make.



The templates rely heavily on CSS but this does not mean you will need to become a CSS expert. In fact, quite the opposite is true. The CSS files are all built, optimized, and tested and provided for you, so that you do not need to write any CSS at all. You just need to read the Style Guide so that you understand how to use the styles in your pages.

## Benefits of CSS

- By relying on external, site-wide style sheets, each individual page has much simpler and shorter code. This typically results in decreased page load time about 40-50% on average - a huge benefit to users. The style sheets only have to be retrieved from the server once when the user first comes to your site; then the files are cached and as the user visits more pages on your site (or other Maine.gov sites), they benefit from very fast downloads of pages.
- Using CSS improves site accessibility for the disabled, since it simplifies your code and makes the pages easily machine-readable. It also gives users more ability to override the site settings with their own settings.
- CSS allows you to have an attractive design without using a lot of images, which add to download time and are difficult to update.
- CSS gives you greater ability to change your site's look and feel in the future, without having to change your actual HTML pages. Change one or a few CSS files, and your entire site is updated automatically.
- Many old HTML tags are being phased out of newer browser standards. By using CSS, your web pages will be viewable as new browsers are introduced.

## The Style Sheets

The templates rely on five external style sheets. A copy of all the style sheets is provided in the Template Kit.

Style Sheets		
File Name	Function	Edit Options
index.css	Master style sheet that calls the other style sheets	May change the color scheme selection. No other edits.
general.css	Main style sheet that contains all the standard formatting for the templates	No edits allowable. This file is held centrally on the server.
awt_blue.css awt_green.css awt_red.css awt_orange.css awt_light_blue.css	Color scheme style sheet. Contains only the information to control the color scheme.	No edits allowable. These files are held centrally on the server (only one of these files is used per site).
header.css	Controls the header background image, background color, and styling of the search label and Site Map link text.	May be edited, according to the instructions in the Style Guide. See the Agency Header section.
custom.css	Provides optional additional formatting, such as data table styling.	May be edited to modify the provided optional styles in this file or add new styles as needed.

The main style sheet (general.css) and the color style sheets are standard and held centrally on the server; they may not be edited. A copy of the files is provided in the Kit so that you can keep a local copy and see the styling while editing your local pages.

Keeping the main CSS files standard and centralized will ensure enterprise-wide consistency and provides every site with correctly-coded, optimized CSS that has been thoroughly tested for browser compatibility. If you make changes, you may inadvertently cause browser compatibility problems, as well as creating styles that are not consistent with the state standards. We will periodically update the style sheets to address any bugs or browser compatibility issues that might arise. InforME can correct the code in a single location and agency sites will always be using the most updated version.

The `<style></style>` tags in all template pages contain the code for the external CSS and are located inside the `<head></head>` tags:

```
<style type="text/css">
@import url(css/index.css);
</style>
```

This code directs the browser to import the index.css file found in the CSS directory. *This code in your pages may not be edited.* All the style sheets are linked from this single “master” style sheet called index.css.

There are three style sheets provided that may be edited (optional): index.css, custom.css, and header.css.

## Index.css - Selecting a Color Scheme

The web templates are available in several color schemes for you to choose from. The color scheme is completely controlled through the CSS, so you just need to link the appropriate style sheet for the color scheme you want. Do not edit the general.css or the color scheme style sheets.

You may select a color scheme simply by opening the index.css file and changing one line of code. Do not edit anything else in the index.css file. You should also download a copy of the color style sheet and put it into your /css/ directory so that you see the correct color scheme when editing your page locally.

The default code for indicating the color style sheet is in the last lines of index.css and looks like this (the default color scheme is Maine.gov Blue and named “awt\_blue.css”):

```
@import url(awt_blue.css);
@import url(http://www.maine.gov/awt/css/awt_blue.css);
```

Just change the name of the style sheet in first line and in the second line (URL) from “awt\_blue.css” to one of the following:

- Light Blue – awt\_light\_blue.css
- Green – awt\_green.css
- Red – awt\_red.css
- Orange – awt\_orange.css

The color scheme will automatically be applied throughout your site. Additional color schemes may be added in the future.

If you have a need for a custom color scheme for a special program or marketing campaign with established branding, you may request approval in advance from the CIO’s Office to develop this. Note: Custom style sheets will not be updated automatically with bug-fixes as the standard style sheets are.

## Header.css - Adjusting the Search & Site Map Link Colors

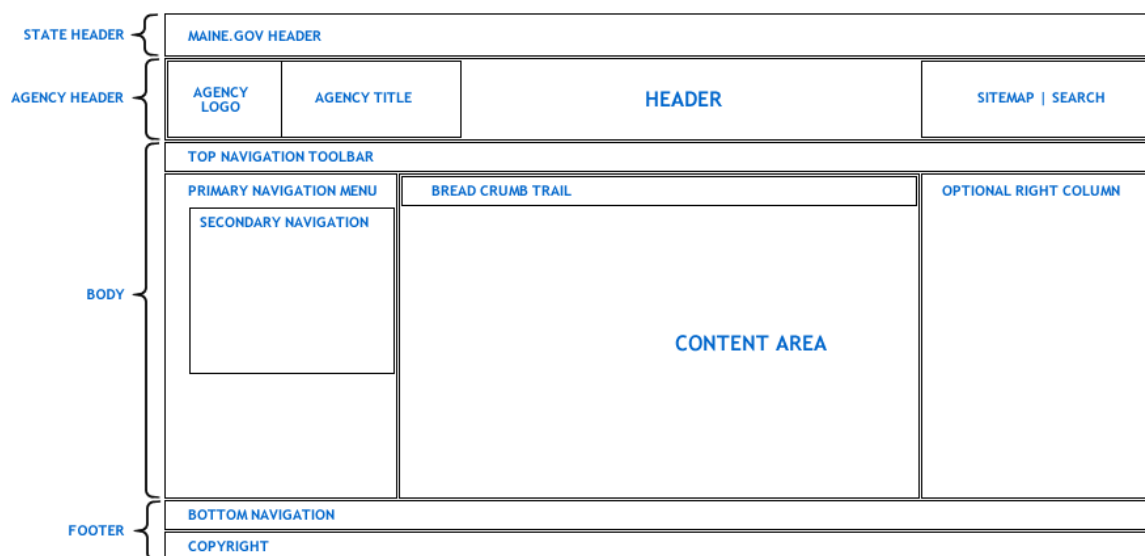
Depending on the background image or color you are using in your header, you may need to adjust the text color of the Search label and Site Map link in the header. This is done in the header.css file (see *Creating an Agency Header* for details).

## Custom.css - Adding Custom Styles

You may add additional styles in the custom.css style sheet for elements that are undefined in the standard style sheet and are a special need of your site, such as a special format for captions, quotes or data tables. The custom.css file includes default formatting for data tables (shown in the Template Kit in /inner/index.html) that you may customize with different colors. You may not override settings in the main style sheet with your own.

## Layout

An image “blueprint” of the layout is shown below. The overall page layout includes the following components, each of which will be described separately: the state header, the agency header, the top navigation toolbar, the primary navigation menu, the breadcrumb trail navigation, the content area, and the footer.



The page layout uses 5 simple HTML tables. Styling of the tables is controlled by CSS. The HTML does not specify any widths or sizes of the tables and table cells. This is important for proper display and for accessibility. Be careful not to drag or change the table or cell borders in Dreamweaver, as that will change the table settings to fixed pixels and your page will not display correctly.

## Page Properties

### DOCTYPE

The DOCTYPE is the document type declaration and is the first line of code on each page. It states which version of HTML is being used and this tells browsers how to interpret the code. It

also allows you to use a validator to make sure that all your code is standard and correct, which will ensure better browser compatibility.

The templates use standard XHTML 1.0 Transitional and this is indicated in the DOCTYPE statement included in all the templates:

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN"  
"http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
```

This statement is very important. If it is removed the pages will not display correctly in a browser. For more explanation of XHTML, please see the section *About XHTML*.

## HTML Edition

The HTML edition is located in the opening `<html>` tag. It looks like this:

```
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml lang="en-US" xml:lang="en">
```

This is already part of the templates and you should not edit or remove it.

## Meta Data

Meta data are information about your page and its content, provided within the `<head></head>` section of the code.

## Page Title

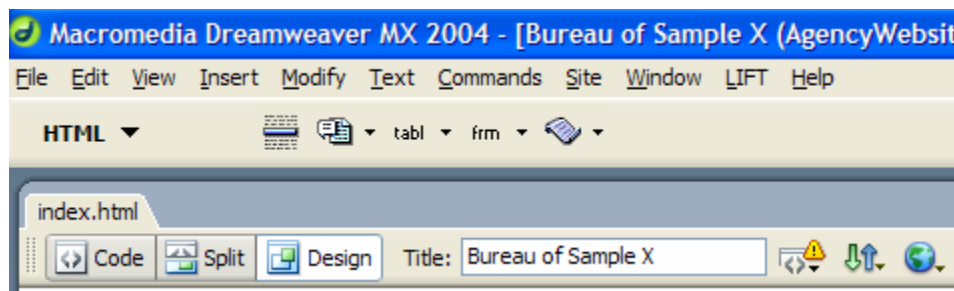
Each page must contain a unique page title. This title will appear at the top of the browser window when viewing the page, and is also used when someone bookmarks the page and as the page name in search engine results. It's important for accessibility and usability that each page has a unique title that reflects its content.

The page title appears in the templates in the `<head></head>` area, like this:

```
<title>Bureau of Sample X</title>
```

You should use a consistent format throughout your site for page titles, such as “Site Name: Page Name” (for example, “Maine.gov: Site Map”), or “Site Name: Section Name: Page Name” (for example, “Maine.gov: Living: Automobiles”). Items within the title should be separated using a colon.

To edit the page title in Dreamweaver, simply type the title into the white box at the top of your page editing area, labeled “Title”. You may also use “Modify → Page Properties → Title/Encoding”.



## Keywords and Description

The home page of each agency's site and (optionally) other key pages should include meta-tags for keywords and description. These are used by search engines in indexing your pages.

The templates include the following code within the <head></head> area:

```
<meta name="description" content=" " />
<meta name="keywords" content=" " />
```

You will need to insert a description and keywords into the area between the quotes for the content value.

### Description:

The information provided in the "description" meta-tag is used by search engines to assist users in finding search information relevant to search criteria. On search results pages, the description is often used as the page description in the search results listing. The description should be a brief sentence, less than 25 words, describing either the site or page.

Example:

```
<meta name="description" content="The Bureau of Sample X provides
government documentation for the citizens of the State. " />
```

### Keywords:

The information provided in the "keywords" meta-tag is used by search engines to assist users in finding search words relevant to search criteria. The keywords should be a brief list of words and/or phrases separated by commas, describing either the site or page. Two word phrases are often more effective than single words.

Example:

```
<meta name="keywords" content="Bureau of Sample X, government
documentation, online services, state government" />
```

Note: You do not need to have meta-tags on every page. On a smaller site, just the home page should be sufficient. On a large site, you might also want to include them on the main page for each section.

### To edit keywords and description tags in Dreamweaver:

The easiest way to edit these tags is just to switch to Code View or Split View (so you can see the HTML code), scroll to the top of the code and locate the meta-tags. You can just type your keywords and description right into the appropriate place.

More about how to write meta-tags:

- <http://www2.bc.edu/~oneill/meta-desc-keyword.html>
- <http://searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/article.php/2167931>

## Other Meta-Tags

Two additional meta-tags are included within the <head></head> section of all templates. These tags should not be edited or removed:

```
<meta http-equiv="content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1"
/>

<meta http-equiv="content-Language" content="en-us" />
```

## Maine.gov Header

---

The standard Maine.gov Header is automatically attached to the top of all pages hosted by Maine.gov. The header is applied by the server when your pages are viewed in a browser. You do not need to add the header code to your pages, and you will not see the state header when editing your pages locally. The Agency Website Template is designed to accommodate the addition of the State Header.

## Skip Navigation Links

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Federal Section 508 accessibility standards and Maine state policy require the inclusion of a “skip navigation” function in web pages with repetitive navigation. This allows a blind user with screen reader software to skip over your navigation menu directly to the main page content, which greatly speeds up their reading of pages.

The templates include the code for two levels of skip navigation links. Do not edit this code. You should just be aware of it so that you understand why these links and their corresponding anchor tags are present. The skip navigation links are invisible to the sighted user.

The following code is located after the opening <body> tag:

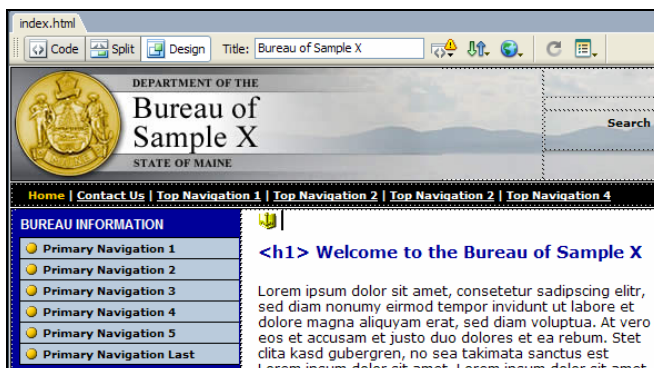
```
<p class="awt-skipNav"><a href="#first-level-nav" accesskey="S"
title="Skip First Level Navigation: Alt+S">Skip First Level
Navigation</a> | <a href="#page-body" accesskey="C" title="Skip All
Navigation: Alt+C">Skip All Navigation</a></p>
```

The first link (“Skip First Level Navigation”) skips over the header area and top navigation toolbar. The second link (“Skip All Navigation”) skips over the header, top navigation toolbar, and primary navigation menu, directly to the top of the content area.

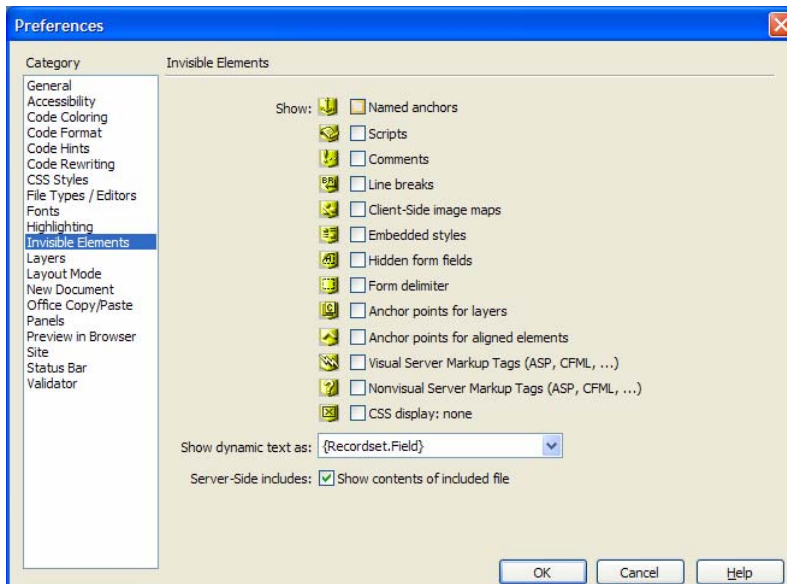
In order for these links to work, there are corresponding anchor tags:

- Near the top of the left column after the tag <div id="awt-leftside">, there is the anchor tag <p class="awt-skipNav"><a name="first-levelnav"></a></p>.
- At the top of the middle column (content area), after the tag <div id="awt-content-area">, there is the anchor tag <a name="page-body"></a>.

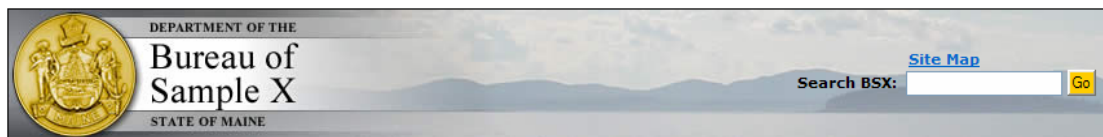
In Dreamweaver, depending on your settings, these anchor tags may show up as a tiny yellow icon. For example, you will see a yellow icon right above the main page heading in the content area. Do not delete the anchors!



You can turn off the anchor icons in Dreamweaver by editing your Preferences (under Invisible Elements, uncheck the “Named Anchors” box). This won’t delete the anchors, it just keeps you from having to see the yellow icon in Design View.



## Agency Branding & Identification



The Agency Header appears on every page immediately below the Maine.gov Header, and provides space for branding and identification of the agency. The Agency Header will be the same throughout the agency’s site. The Agency Header is a flexible area that may vary in appearance from one site to another. We have provided a recommended format and sample graphics, but you may create your own header to match the purpose of your site and the tone of your agency, within the following specifications.

The Agency Header must include your agency’s name, and typically will include either the State Seal or your agency logo. It also must include the site search and Site Map link (unless you use the Site Search Variation described later in this document), and may include background imagery. If your agency is a sub-agency within a larger Department, your header should include the name of the department as well as your own entity name.

### Agency Logo and Background

The Agency Header will include either the State Seal (provided) or the agency’s logo, and the name of the agency. In the example provided in the Kit, these are combined as a single image. The Template Kit includes an image file with the State Seal for you to use when creating your own header graphic, in Macromedia Fireworks format. For specific instructions on creating a logo and background for the header, see section *Creating the Agency Header*.

Please note: you are not required to use this image. You may create your own header image as long as it meets the size specifications: The logo/seal image must be exactly 101px in height and no more than 400px in width.

To replace the sample logo/seal image used in the templates, create an image (see *Creating the Agency Header*) and name it "header\_agency\_logo.jpg". Replace the one in the "images" folder with your new image file. Be sure to edit the ALT text for the image in the templates. The ALT text should include the name of your agency and either "Maine" or "State of Maine", for example, "Maine Bureau of Sample X" or "Bureau of Sample X, State of Maine".

The "header\_agency\_logo.jpg" must function as a link to the site's home page, except on the home page itself. The home page template does not include the link code and this should not be changed. On all inner pages, be sure that the link to your home page URL has been included.

The imagery in the header (other than the logo/id image) is a background image that is called through the CSS. You may use the background image (landscape scene) provided in the sample header if you wish to, or create your own background. You may also use a solid background color if you prefer. See *Creating the Agency Header* for details about the header background. To change the background image, create an image named header\_agency\_logo\_bg.jpg and replace the one in the images folder with your new one. You may also need to make changes to the CSS file header.css located in the CSS folder.

The following code makes up the agency logo/seal and background:

```
<table id="awt-header" cellspacing="0">
<tr>
<td id="awt-logo"></td>
```

## Site Search & Site Map

Typically, the site search and the Site Map link will be part of the Agency Header, appearing on the right-hand side. The templates include the code for this. There is one approved alternative format - see the *Site Search Variation* section of this document.

## Code

The following code makes up the agency search and site map link:

```
<td id="awt-search">
<form method="get" action="http://www.maine.gov/search">
<table cellspacing="0" id="awt-searchForm">
<tr>
<td></td>
<td id="awt-site-map">&nbsp;<a href="#">Site Map</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td id="awt-search-label"><label for="awt-search-box">Search
BSX:</label></td>
<td id="awt-search-textbox"><input type="text" name="q" id="awt-search-
box"/></td>
<td id="awt-search-button"><input type="submit" name="button"
value="Go"/>
<input type="hidden" name="as_sitesearch"
value="http://www.maine.gov/yourURLhere"/>
<input type="hidden" name="site" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="output" value="xml_no_dtd"/>
<input type="hidden" name="client" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="proxystylesheet"
value="test_collection"/></td>
</tr>
</table>
```



```
</form>
</td>
</tr>
</table>
```

## Setting Up the Site Search

The templates include the correct code to connect your search form to the Maine.gov Google search engine. There are a couple of things you will need to customize for your site when you first set up your site templates.

1. You will need to put in your site's URL into the search code on each of the template pages in order for the search to work correctly.

In the following line of code, replace "yourURLhere" with the complete URL to your site, such as <http://www.maine.gov/sos/>. Note: Use the URL to your site's directory, not a URL for a specific page on your site.

```
<input type="hidden" name="as_sitesearch"
value="http://www.maine.gov/yourURLhere" />
```

To do this in Dreamweaver, switch to Code view and locate the search form in the code. Look for the line listed above and make the change as indicated.

2. You will need to edit the search label on each of the template pages. The search label should be the text "Search" followed by the agency name or acronym, such as "Search SOS" (Secretary of State) or "Search Library". This differentiates for the user this agency site search from the statewide search in the Maine.gov header above it. The template code already includes the label tag around the search label which is required for accessibility. The code also includes the corresponding id "awt-search-box" on the input field to meet the accessibility requirements.

The following information is provided for reference. You do not need to make any changes to the code listed below. Please note the following:

- The search form must have the method "get" and action must be "http://www.maine.gov/search".
- The following hidden input fields must be included:

```
<input type="hidden" name="site" value="test_collection" />
<input type="hidden" name="output" value="xml_no_dtd" />
<input type="hidden" name="client" value="test_collection" />
<input type="hidden" name="proxystylesheet" value="test_collection" />
```

## Site Map Link

The Site Map link must be included on all sites. You will need to create a Site Map page within your site and adjust the link code in the templates to point to your Site Map page.

A Site Map is a textual listing of the pages on your site, down to 2-3 levels deep. Pages should be listed in a logical order according to the site's navigation and informational hierarchy. For an example of a site map, see <http://www.maine.gov/portal/sitemap.html>. Your Site Map page should be updated if pages on your site are removed, added, or moved.

A site map provides an alternative navigation method and can help users who are having trouble locating information on your site. It can also help users understand how content on your site is organized. In addition, site maps are helpful for accessibility.

## Formatting Options for Search and Site Map Text

If you customize the background image in your Agency Header, you may need to adjust the text formatting of the Search label and Site Map link so that they are readable over your imagery. The following elements may be adjusted in the CSS file header.css located in the CSS folder:

- **awt-search-label**  
Adjustments to the font color and weight (normal or bold) can be made to this element. No additions or subtractions from this element should be made. You may change the font color to black or white.
- **awt-searchForm a, awt-searchForm a:visited and awt-searchForm a:hover (site map link states)**  
Adjustments to the link color and weight (normal or bold) can be made to this element. No additions or subtractions from this element should be made. You may change the font color to white or the default blue link color.

For more information see the section *Creating the Agency Header*.

## Assistance

If you do not have image editing software or resources to create a header, you may hire InforME to create a header using the State Seal or your logo, for a nominal fee.

## Agency Header Code

The following code makes up the Agency Header:

```
<!-- Start of Header -->
<table id="awt-header" cellspacing="0">
<tr>
<td id="awt-logo"></td>
<td id="awt-search">
<form method="get" action="http://www.maine.gov/search">
<table cellspacing="0" id="awt-searchForm">
<tr>
<td></td>
<td id="awt-site-map">&nbsp;<a href="#">Site Map</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td id="awt-search-label"><label for="awt-search-box">Search
BSX:</label></td>
<td id="awt-search-textbox"><input type="text" name="q" id="awt-search-
box"/></td>
<td id="awt-search-button"><input type="submit" name="button"
value="Go"/>
<input type="hidden" name="as_sitesearch"
value="http://www.maine.gov/yourURLhere"/>
<input type="hidden" name="site" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="output" value="xml_no_dtd"/>
<input type="hidden" name="client" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="proxystylesheet"
value="test_collection"/></td>
</tr>
</table>
</form>
</td>
</tr>
</table>
<!-- End of Header -->
```

## Top Navigation Toolbar

---

**Home | Contact Us | Top Navigation 1 | Top Navigation 2 | Top Navigation 2 | Top Navigation 4**

The Top Navigation Toolbar is the black row right below the Agency Header. This toolbar is to be used for “one-click” links to site tools, such as the contact page, forms, publications, or news. It is not to be used for primary navigation topics.

### Required Elements

The following links are required in the Top Navigation Toolbar:

#### Home Link

This is always the first link in the Toolbar and is included in the templates. The Home link should always link to the home page of the current site (the entity named in the header), not to a parent site.

On the home page template, the Home link is displayed in its “on” state and is not a link. This must not be edited.

On inner pages, the Home link is displayed in its “off” state and is a link to your home page (index.htm). You will not need to edit this unless your home page is not named index.htm.

#### Contact Page

This is always the second link in the Toolbar and is included in the templates. The default wording is “Contact Us” but you may also use “Contact [Agency]” if you prefer (inserting the name or acronym of your agency).

You will need to create a Contact page for your site. We recommend including at the top of the page your agency’s primary address, telephone number, TTY number, fax number, and a general email address. It is a good idea to include a webmaster email address or link to a webmaster contact form for comments or problems with the website. You also may want to include additional detailed information about contacting specific offices or staff.

You will need to insert the correct URL to your site’s contact page into your templates.

On the Contact Us page itself, the Contact link must be displayed in its “on” state and is not a link:

```
<span class="awt-on">Contact Us</span>
```

On all other pages of the site, the Contact link must be displayed in its “off” state and linked. All you need to do is put in the link and the “off” styling happens automatically via the CSS:

```
<a href="linkhere">Contact Us</a>
```

To add the “on” styling in Dreamweaver, simply highlight the link, then select “awt-on” from the list of styles in the Properties box (“Style”). You will also need to remove the link by deleting the URL from the Link box. To remove the “on” styling in Dreamweaver, highlight the link and select “none” from the Style list.

#### Online Services

If your agency provides any online services, this link should be included as the third link in the Toolbar. Online services provide convenience and service to users and create efficiencies for your agency, so it’s important to highlight them in a consistent way throughout state websites.

Online services include any government transaction that can take place online (payments, filings, etc.), interactive searches, online fillable forms, and other interactive applications.

You may need to create an Online Services page for your site. An example of an Online Services page is [http://www.maine.gov/sos/online\\_services/index.html](http://www.maine.gov/sos/online_services/index.html).

You will need to insert the correct URL to your site's Online Services page into your templates.

On the Online Services page itself, the Online Services link must be displayed in its "on" state and is not a link:

```
<span class="awt-on">Online Services</span>
```

On all other pages of the site, the Online Services link must be displayed in its "off" state and linked. All you need to do is put in the link and the "off" styling happens automatically via the CSS:

```
<a href="linkhere">Online Services</a>
```

To add the "on" styling in Dreamweaver, simply highlight the link, then select "awt-on" from the list of styles in the Properties box ("Style"). You will also need to remove the link by deleting the URL from the Link box. To remove the "on" styling in Dreamweaver, highlight the link and select "none" from the Style list, and then add the URL in the Link box.

## Optional Elements

You may add more links to your Top Navigation Toolbar if appropriate for your site. Some recommended links that work well here are:

- Forms
- Publications
- News
- Events or Calendar
- Newsletter
- Links
- Partners

That said, don't overdo it! Three or four additional links is probably the limit, beyond which your Toolbar will start to look cluttered. You also will need to make sure that your line of links does not get too long. Keep the link names short and concise. If you have several links, test your template at a resolution of 800x600 and make sure the Toolbar line does not begin to wrap onto a second line.

To add a link to the Toolbar, simply type over or copy one of the sample links in the template Toolbar and put in the appropriate URL. Delete any of the sample links that you are not using.

Remember to change the link styling for each of the linked pages. For example, if you add a Forms link, remember that on the Forms page itself, you need to change the Forms link to the "on" state and unlink it:

```
<span class="awt-on">Forms</span>
```

## Site Search/Site Map Placement Variation

The default placement of the search and Site Map is in the right side of the Agency Header. The code for the default placement is included in the templates. There is one approved alternative placement of the search and Site Map link. Instead of being in the Agency Header, these may be placed in the right side of the Top Navigation Toolbar. This only works if you do not have more

than three or four links in your Toolbar, otherwise the two sides may overlap at smaller browser sizes.

Example:



If you wish to use this variation, you will need to first remove the Search/Site Map code from the Agency Header, by removing the search table in the Header row.

Remove all of the following code from the Agency Header:

```
<td id="awt-search">
<form method="get" action="http://www.maine.gov/search">
<table cellpadding="0" id="awt-searchForm">
<tr>
<td></td>
<td id="awt-site-map">&nbsp;<a href="#">Site Map</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td id="awt-search-label"><label for="awt-search-box">Search
BSX:</label></td>
<td id="awt-search-textbox"><input type="text" name="q" id="awt-search-
box"/></td>
<td id="awt-search-button"><input type="submit" name="button"
value="Go"/>
<input type="hidden" name="as_sitesearch"
value="http://www.maine.gov/yourURLhere"/>
<input type="hidden" name="site" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="output" value="xml_no_dtd"/>
<input type="hidden" name="client" value="test_collection"/>
<input type="hidden" name="proxystylesheet"
value="test_collection"/></td>
```

Next, in the Top Navigation Toolbar, you will need to add another cell in the Toolbar row and insert the Site Map and Search code (see below). The Site Map link should always be first, followed by the Search box and Go button. Below is an example of the code:

```
<!-- Start of Top Navigation -->
<table id="awt-topNav" border="0" cellpadding="0">
<tr>
<td id="awt-topNav-links"><span class="awt-on">Home</span> | <a
href="contact/index.html">Contact Us</a></td>
<td id="awt-topNav-search"><form action="http://www.maine.gov/search"
method="get"><a href="sitemap/index.html">Site Map</a> |
<span id="awt-search-label"><label for="search"> Search
Site:</label></span>
<span id="awt-search-textbox"><input type="text" name="q"
id="search"/></span><span id="awt-search-button"><input type="submit"
name="button" value="GO"/></span><input type="hidden"
name="as_sitesearch" value="http://www.maine.gov/yoursite/"><input
type="hidden" name="site" value="test_collection"/><input type="hidden"
name="output" value="xml_no_dtd"/><input type="hidden" name="client"
value="test_collection"/><input type="hidden" name="proxystylesheet"
value="test_collection"/></form></td>
</tr>
</table>
<!-- End of Top Navigation -->
```

## Code

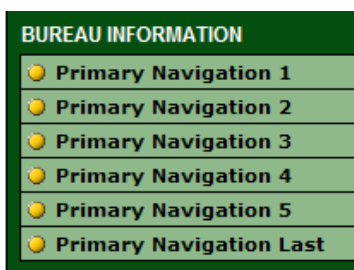
The following code makes up the default Top Navigation Toolbar (this example is from the template home page):

```
<!-- Start of Top Navigation -->
<table id="awt-topNav" border="0" cellspacing="0" cellpadding="0">
<tr>
<td id="awt-topNav-links"><span class="awt-on">Home</span> | <a
href="#">Contact Us</a> | <a href="#">Top Navigation 1</a> | <a
href="#">Top Navigation 2</a> | <a href="#">Top Navigation 2</a> | <a
href="#">Top Navigation 4</a></td>
</tr>
</table>
<!-- End of Top Navigation -->
```

## Primary Navigation Menu

---

Your Primary Navigation Menu appears in the left-side column and shows your main content topics/links. The template design can accommodate navigation up to three levels deep (described further below).



## Content Organization & Architecture

Before you start building your site or converting an existing site, you will need to think carefully about your site architecture. This refers to the organization of your site content and your site navigation system. If your current site has numerous links of all kinds on the home page, or when you create a new page you aren't sure where to put it on the site, this may be a sign that you need to alter the site architecture. Site content should be organized into a logical hierarchy, grouped into categories and sub-categories. Be sure to focus on how your users think about the information rather than going solely by your internal organizational structure.

Try to limit your main navigation to about 8 links at most. This may not always be possible, and you may have as many links as you wish. Just be careful that you don't overwhelm the user with too many links unnecessarily. Not everything has to be linked directly from the home page. Also remember that even if pages are deeper down in your site hierarchy, you can still highlight them on the home page using the right-side column in the content area (such as "Featured", "Highlights", etc.).

When naming your main navigation links, use intuitive labels that will make sense to users. Avoid jargon and acronyms. Try to keep your navigation labels short and concise.

## Skip Navigation Anchor

The first tag element in the primary navigation section is the "skip navigation" anchor:

```
<p class="awt-skipNav"><a name="first-level-nav"></a></p>.
```

This is required for accessibility compliance and must not be removed. You do not need to edit this and it will not be visible on your pages.

## **Menu Heading**

At the top of the Primary Navigation Menu is a textual menu heading. This heading is formatted as an H4 (<h4></h4>). Typically the header will be either “DEPARTMENT INFORMATION”, “BUREAU INFORMATION”, “PROGRAM INFORMATION”, or “OFFICE INFORMATION”. The name may be adjusted to meet your site’s needs but should be consistent with the purpose of describing the information presented in your Primary Navigation Menu.

## **First Level Navigation**

The first level of navigation consists of your main navigation categories as displayed on your home page.

The Primary Navigation Menu code uses simple unordered list tags <ul> and link tags. The formatting, including colors, background, bullets and spacing, is all from CSS.

Example of Menu link:

```
<li><a href="yourURL">Primary Navigation 2</a></li>
```

## **Putting in Your Links**

To add your menu links, simply type the text over one of the sample navigation items in the template and add the appropriate URL for the link. To add more links after the sample links provided, just use the Enter key after the last link to create a new line and then type the link name. Then highlight the text and add your link/URL using the Properties box. Note: When you first type in a new item, it may look strange until you add the link. The styling comes from the link tag.

## **Indicating the Current Page**

On each inner page of your site, the Primary Navigation Menu will indicate the user’s location by highlighting the current (“active”) navigation category in the menu. This is done through CSS, but you will need to edit the menu code slightly on each page to indicate the active category.

For example, if you have a menu link called “About Us”, then on your About Us page itself, you will need to change the About Us link in the menu to its “on” or “active” state:

```
<li><a href="yourURL" class="on">Primary Navigation 2</a></li>
```

The “on” class is added to the link tag. To do this in Dreamweaver, first click on the relevant menu link then select the Code or Split View and make the change in the code. Or, highlight the relevant link and then select the style “on” from the Styles drop-down menu in the Properties box.

## **Second Level Navigation**

As described above, the first level of navigation consists of the main menu categories displayed on your home page. When a user clicks one of your main navigation categories from the home page, they then see that category’s main page and their current location is highlighted. If that active category contains sub-pages or sub-sections, then the next level of navigation links is displayed and is referred to as your Second Level Navigation. The active category in the Menu will expand to show its sub-category links.



For example, if a user clicks “About Us” from the home page, they see the About Us page. If there are sub-pages such as “Staff”, “Directions”, and “Funding”, these second level links will be displayed in the Navigation Menu under the About Us category.

This is what the code looks like for an active menu category with sub-pages (this would be the code on the “About Us” page):

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">About Us</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink">Staff</a></li>
<li><a href="yourlink">Directions</a></li>
<li><a href="yourlink">Funding</a></li>
```

You can see that the main category item (“About Us”) is made active with the class “on”.

## Putting in Sub-Page Links

To add the sub-page links, first place your cursor at the end of the active category link (such as “About Us”), then use the Enter key to add a new line, and type in your link name. Then highlight the link name and put in the link/URL in the Properties box. Finally, with your cursor at the beginning of the link name, use the “text indent” button in the Properties box to indent the line to the second level. Note: Your link may look strange until you add the URL. The styling comes from the link tag. To see the styling without putting in a URL, you may put in “#” in the Link box instead as a placeholder.

The Template Kit includes the /innerSecond/index.htm page to provide you with a complete example of a second level page and its navigation format.

## Indicating the Current Page

As you build your pages, on each second level page you will include the expanded menu for the current navigation category, and you will also need to indicate the current page being viewed. To continue the previous example, if the user clicks on “Staff” under your “About Us” category, you need to indicate that the user is now on the “Staff” page. You just need to make one additional change to your menu on the “Staff” page:

Change the current page’s link (in this example, “Staff”) in the menu to indicate that it is the current page. Just add the class “on” to the link tag for that item:

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Staff</a></li>
```

Note that the active first level link still keeps the class “on” as well, to indicate that it is the active first level category:

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">About Us</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Staff</a></li>
```

## Third Level Navigation

If needed, the navigation menu can go one level deeper. If a user clicks a second-level link that has sub-pages, those third level links will be displayed in the expanded menu.

For example, if a user clicks “About Us” from the home page, they see the About Us page and its sub-pages such as “Staff”, “Directions”, and “Funding”. If the user then clicks on “Staff”, any third level links would be displayed under the Staff link, such as “Main Office”, “Eastern Office”, and “Northern Office”.



The third level navigation functions exactly the same as the second level navigation, except that it is indented one more level.

This is what the code looks like for an active second-level menu category with second and third level sub-category links:

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">About Us</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Staff</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink">Main Office</a></li>
<li><a href="yourlink">Eastern Office</a></li>
<li><a href="yourlink">Northern Office</a></li>
</ul>
</ul>
</li>
```

## Putting in the Sub-Page Links

You add the third level page links by using the Enter key after the appropriate second level parent category (such as “Staff”) to add a new line, then type in the link name and add the URL in the Properties box. Finally, with your cursor at the beginning of the link name, use the “text indent” button in the Properties box to indent the line to the second level.

The Template Kit includes the /innerThird/index.htm page to provide you with a complete example of a third level page and its navigation format.

## Indicating the Current Page

As you build your pages, on each third level page you will include the expanded menu for the current navigation category, and you will also need to indicate the current page being viewed. To continue the previous example, if the user clicks on “Main Office” under your “Staff” category, you need to indicate to the user that they are now on the “Main Office” page. You just need to make one additional change to your menu on the “Staff” page.

Change the current page’s link (in this example, “Main Office”) in the menu to indicate that it is the current page. Just add the class “on” to the link tag for that item:

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Main Office</a></li>
```

Note that the active first level link and second level link still keep the class “on” as well, to indicate that they are the active parent categories:

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">About Us</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Staff</a></li>
<ul>
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">Main Office</a></li>
```

## Deeper Levels of Navigation

If your site has pages more than three levels deep, additional navigation links should be presented in the content area of the page. Continuing the example above, if the “Main Office” page has sub-pages, those would not be presented in the Primary Navigation Menu, but instead in the text content of the Main Office page. This keeps the Primary Navigation Menu from becoming overly complex, long, and confusing to the user.

The presentation of these lower level links is up to you. They could be a bulleted list within the page text. You might consider using a line of links immediately following the page heading. The page heading in our example would say “Main Office Staff”. Below that you might have a horizontal line of sub-page links, separated by a “pipe” (|) character, such as:

Administration | Field Office Staff | Technical Staff | Other Staff

## Usability in the Primary Navigation Menu

For best usability of the Primary Navigation Menu, follow these established website conventions. Users may become confused by variations from these guidelines.

- **Don't open new windows with a link.**  
This is unexpected behavior in a primary navigation menu and can be an accessibility barrier as well as confusing to many users.
- **Avoid linking to external sites from your Primary Navigation Menu.**  
Users expect your main menu's links to lead to pages within your own site. Links to a parent site may be appropriate at times, but avoid linking to another department or non-state sites from your Menu. If you have important external links, put them in the page content or use the right-sidebar in the content area to present "Related Sites".
- **Don't link to PDF or other non-HTML documents from the Primary Navigation Menu.**  
Again, this is unexpected and can be frustrating to users. Links from your main menu should lead to normal HTML pages. Put links to non-HTML documents in your page text and clearly indicate the document format. Or create an intermediate page for non-standard content, describing the content of the document or application, along with a link and clear indication of the format and any necessary plug-in software.

## Breadcrumb Trail Navigation

---

[Home](#) > [Primary Navigation 3](#) > [Secondary Navigation 3.2](#)

Breadcrumb trail navigation must be used on all inner pages of your site. This provides the user a clear indication of their current location within the hierarchy of your site, as well as an alternative navigation system. This is an important usability feature of the templates and the code is included in the inner page templates in the kit.

The breadcrumb trail will need to be edited on each page of your site. It always begins with the Home page link. On second level pages of your site, it will consist of the Home link followed by the current page name. Pages must be separated by the angle bracket (>) character which in Code View will look like "&gt;". For example, Home > About Us. On second level pages it would continue, for example, Home > About Us > Staff. A third level page might look like Home > About Us > Staff > Main Office. The last item in the trail is always the name of the current page and is not a link. All preceding pages in the trail function as links to their respective pages. For example the following code is used on the second level template:

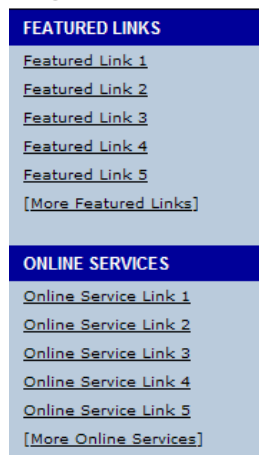
```
<p class="awt-crumbs"><a href="../index.html">Home</a> &gt; Primary  
Navigation 1 ></p>
```

All styling for the breadcrumb trail comes from the CSS. The <p> tag contains a CSS class which should not be edited or removed.

## Content Area

---

### Right-Side Column



The right-side column of the content area is optional and may be used or not used on any of your pages. On the home page, the right-side column is a great place for highlighting new or important content, online services, or featured programs. The template home page includes the right-side column. If you wish to remove it, simply delete the code between the `<!-- Start of Right Column -->` and `<!-- End of Right Column -->` comment tags.

On inner pages, the right-side column may be a good place to put “Related Sites”, “Related Links”, or to highlight announcements or featured content. To add the right-side column to a page that does not have it, copy the code from the template between the `<!-- Start of Right Column -->` and `<!-- End of Right Column -->` comment tags, and paste it between those same tags in your page.

You may have one or more “sections” of content within the right-side column. To create a section heading, simply type your text and then apply the `<h4>` tag. The formatting will be applied automatically.

Underneath each section heading, use an unordered list (bulleted list) to present a series of links. The CSS provides formatting so that the bullets are not visible and your list will appear as you see on the template. Even though the bullets are not visible, using list markup is preferred for accessibility and clean coding. Additional stylistic formatting for the right-column content should be made in your custom.css file if needed.

### Removing the Left Side Column

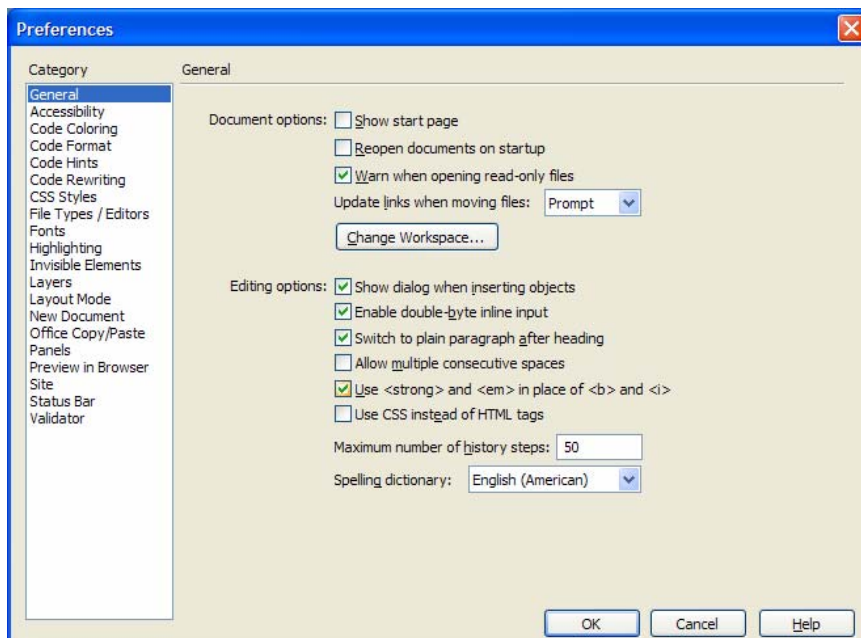
The Primary Navigation Menu is very important to usability and navigation of your site and should remain on every page of your site where it possibly can. There may be a few pages on some agency sites that require the whole width of the content area to present complex content such as large data tables. In those specific cases, it is acceptable to remove the left navigation column by removing the code between the `<!-- Start of Left Column -->` and `<!-- End of Left Column -->` comment tags. This is to be done only when truly necessary. Be sure that the Breadcrumb Trail Navigation remains on the page.

### Formatting Content

The standard style sheets include styles to format all standard page content, including fonts, text sizing, heading styles, link styles, and more. **Do not use font tags.** Simply structure your content

correctly using the heading tags (h1, h2, h3), links, lists, and the <strong> (bold) and <em> (italics) tags.

Be sure to change your preferences in Dreamweaver so that it uses the preferred tags for bolding and italics (Edit → Preferences → General → “Use <strong> and <em> in place of <b> and <i>”).



All other styling will be done for you automatically so that your site content looks professional and consistent with other Maine.gov sites.

Be careful when converting or copying content from an existing site into your new pages using the templates. You may inadvertently copy a lot of extra code and font tags along with your text. It is recommended that you copy your text first into a program like NotePad (you'll find this under Start → Programs → Accessories in Windows), which will turn it into plain text, then copy it into your new page in Dreamweaver. You will probably need to adjust or reapply some of the formatting using headings tags and lists (remember, no font tags!).

If using content from a Microsoft Word document, watch out for Word's "Save as HTML" feature – this will produce terrible, non-standard, bloated code. Instead, try just copying and pasting the text from Word into your Dreamweaver page and check the code to make sure nothing unnecessary was inserted (like font tags). Or you can use Word's "Save as HTML" feature followed by the free Textism Word Cleaner tool available online at <http://textism.com/wordcleaner/>.

## Heading Structure

Logical heading and content structure improves the usability and accessibility of your pages.

You should always include a main page heading at the top of your content area, formatted as an <h1>. This should be the name of your page, matching the name used in the Page Title and in the navigation menu and breadcrumb trail.

Use subheadings to break up and organize your text. You may use up to two levels of subheadings, by selecting <h2> or <h3>. Note that <h4> is reserved for the left and right side column headings.

Note: You do not need to use the bold tag on headings and should not change the font, color, or size. The formatting of headings is provided by the standard style sheets.

## Lists

When presenting lists in your content, always mark them up properly using HTML bulleted lists `<ul>` or numbered lists `<ol>`. In Dreamweaver, simply highlight the text and click on the bulleted or numbered list icon in the Properties box, then adjust your content as needed.

If you wish to add a series of links or content that is list-like but do not wish the bullets to show up (see the sample “What’s New” content on the template home page), you may use a bulleted list and then add the class “plain” to the opening `<ul>` tag. This is optional but is recommended for accessibility and for good coding practices.

Example:

```
<h2>What's New at the Bureau </h2>
<ul class="plain">
  <li><a href="#">What's New link 1</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">What's New link 2</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">What's New link 3</a></li>
  <li>[ <a href="#">More News</a> ]</li>
</ul>
```

## Links

The color and formatting of text links and visited links are controlled by the standard style sheets. All text links in the content area are automatically underlined.

## Body Text

Body text uses the font Verdana, which is a sans-serif font designed specifically for the Web. Research has shown this font to be easy to read on-screen. Body text is black type on a white background and all styling is controlled through the standard style sheets. Do not add background colors or background images to your pages and do not edit text settings such as fonts, sizes or colors. You may use bolding (`<strong>` tag) or italics (`<em>` tag). Do not underline regular text – users will think it is a link. Only links should be underlined.

## Data Tables

Two sample data tables, including proper accessibility coding, have been provided for you within the template `/inner/index.html`.

Simple Data Table 1 Caption

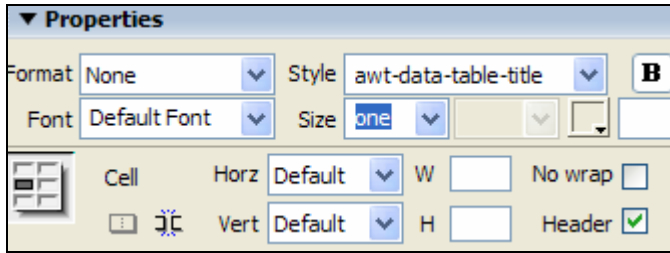
Towns	Cities	Counties
Allagash	Biddeford	Aroostook
Damariscotta	Lewiston	Cumberland
Fairfield	Portland	Somerset
Kennebunk	Saco	Waldo

Simple Data Table 2 Caption

Name	Address	Phone #	Fax #
Jane Brown	123 Park Ln., Augusta, ME 04330	(207) 555-0000	(207) 555-4444
John Public	45 Main St., Augusta, ME 04330	(207) 555-1111	(207) 555-5555
Claudia Le Blanc	678 Summer Dr., Augusta, ME 04330	(207) 555-2222	(207) 555-6666
Juan Lopez	90 Water Rd., Augusta, ME 04330	(207) 555-3333	(207) 555-7777

When you indicate your table headers (using the `<th>` tag or by checking the box in Dreamweaver) the “header” formatting will automatically be applied to those cells.

To indicate your table headers in Dreamweaver, select a row, column, or cell of your data table, then check the “Header” box in the Properties area.



The styling for the data tables is defined in the custom.css file and may be edited if you wish to change the colors. By default, the header formatting uses a black background with white bolded text. To alternate row colors, simply add the appropriate class to the <tr> tag as follows:

Darker row: `<tr class="awt-row-dark">`

Lighter row: `<tr class="awt-row-light">`

To add the “highlight” effect to a specific cell, add the highlight class to that <td> as follows:

```
<td class="awt-highlight">
```

You may change the colors used in the data table styles if you wish by editing the “Data Table” section of the custom.css file:

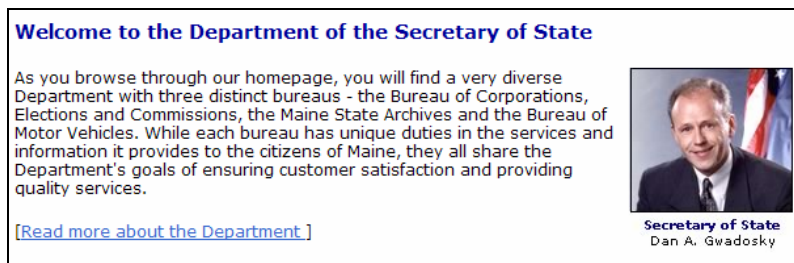
```
/* Start of Table Template: Simple Data Table CSS*/
caption {
    font-weight: bold;
    padding: 4px;
}
.awt-data-table-border {
    border: 1px solid black;
    color: #000;
    margin: 0 0 8px 0;
    padding: 0;
}
.awt-data-table-border td {
    padding: 3px 5px 3px 5px;
    font-size: .85em;
}
tr.awt-data-table-title {
    color: #FFF;
    background-color: #000;
    text-align: left;
}
tr.awt-row-light {
    background-color: #F4F4F4;
}
tr.awt-row-dark {
    background-color: #E1E1E1;
}
td.awt-highlight {
    background-color: #FC0;
}
.awt-data-table-title th {
    padding: 3px 5px 3px 5px;
    font-size: .9em;
    font-weight: bold;
}
.awt-row-dark th, .awt-row-light th {
    padding: 3px 5px 3px 5px;
    background-color: #000;
    font-size: .9em;
}
```

```
font-weight: bold;
color: #FFF;
text-align: left;
}
/* End of Table Template A CSS*/
```

## Images

You may add images to your page content as desired.

If you would like to insert an image to the right side of the content area with text wrapping around it (see example below), put your cursor at the beginning of the first paragraph, insert the image, and select align="right" in the Properties box.

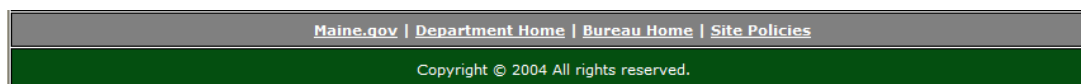


If you insert an image on the left side of the content area, text will automatically wrap around it.

When using images in content, please note:

- You must include ALT text. If the image is purely decorative and not conveying important information, then use empty ALT (alt="").
- Do not use animated graphics such as wiggling "email me" envelopes, moving mailbox icons, etc. These look unprofessional and are distracting to the user. They may also present accessibility barriers.
- Use logos and icons sparingly. Icons on a page should be consistent in look and feel and not compete with one another for attention.
- Use appropriate image formats for the web and the type of graphic you are posting. For example, JPG is usually a better format for photographs and graphics with subtle gradations of color. GIF is usually a better format for graphics with areas of solid color, such as line drawings and illustrations.
- Optimize graphics to the smallest size possible without detriment to clarity. Web image resolution should be reduced to 72 dpi.
- Do not resize graphics using a web editor such as Dreamweaver. Always format the graphic to the necessary size using a graphics editor (such as Photoshop or Fireworks), prior to compression and optimization for the web. If you place a large image on your page and then make it smaller using Dreamweaver, you have not actually changed the image file and your user will still have to download the huge (slow) file unnecessarily.

## Footer



A footer appears at the bottom of all pages and is the same throughout your site. The footer consists of two parts, the footer navigation and the copyright.

## **Footer Navigation**

The footer navigation must include the link to Maine.gov as the first link, followed by a link to (if this is a sub-site of a department) the department home page, then the current entity Home link, and finally the Site Policies link. You may also include a Feedback or User Survey link if you wish.

The color of this row and the link styling are controlled through the standard style sheets and may not be edited.

## **Copyright Row**

The final row of the template is the copyright. This does not need to be edited, except to update the year as we move into the future. The color of this row will match your site's chosen color scheme. The color and text styling are controlled through the standard style sheets and may not be edited.

## **Using Dreamweaver**

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Many tips for using the templates with Dreamweaver are provided throughout the Style Guide.

You may (but do not have to) use Dreamweaver's templating feature with these templates. The navigation menus will need to be editable areas since they change depending on the section and page. A sample Dreamweaver template will be provided on the Webmaster Resource Site.

## **Using the Find and Replace Feature**

This is a wonderful feature in Dreamweaver. If you need to change something throughout your entire site, or in one section, you can open up Find & Replace (under the Edit menu), select your whole site or a sub-directory, put in either text or HTML to find, and what to replace it with. You do need to have a local copy of all the relevant pages in order to effectively use Find & Replace.

## **Organizing a Large Agency Site**

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If you have a large website that includes several bureaus, divisions, or program sub-sites, you will need to think carefully about how best to use the templates before implementing them.

Options for handling a large site include:

1. Use the same header, color scheme and navigation throughout the entire site. The department or primary agency's name would be identified in the header. If your site is particularly deep, this may not work well, since the main navigation menu only allows three levels of depth to be displayed. This method also does not allow easy identification of sub-entities such as bureaus or divisions. This method will work best for an agency that wants to create a fully integrated site whose content is organized according to the users' goals, rather than following internal bureaucratic structures.
2. Break into sub-sites with some global elements. You may choose to break your site up into a parent site (i.e., the Department) and several sub-sites (i.e., bureaus or divisions). Your header should always clearly identify the current entity for each site; for example, on a bureau site, put the department's name in small letters and the bureau's name in larger letters. The navigation menus will be different for each sub-site, reflecting the content for that entity; for example, the navigation menu on the bureau site will be different from that of the Department site. However, you may want to establish some global elements. For example, you may want the links in your top navigation toolbar to always be the same and always link to the Department-level pages. So for example, whether on Bureau X or



- Bureau Y site, the links to “forms”, “news” and “online services” will be present in the toolbar and will link to the Department’s forms, news, and online services pages. Be sure to include both a link to the Department home and to the current entity’s home within the footer navigation. The “Home” link in the top toolbar should always be a link to the current entity (whichever entity is named in the header), not the parent entity. The search and site map may be either department wide or specific to the current entity, but be consistent about how they are used throughout your department.
3. Break into completely separate sub-sites. This is similar to Option 2, but would not include any global elements (other than a link to the department or parent entity in the footer). The navigation, search, and site map all will be specific to the current entity named in the site header.

## Creating an Agency Header

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This section contains detailed instructions for creating an Agency Header, including working with the sample images, adding background imagery or colors, and adjustments to the CSS. Please read this section if you plan to create your own Header, even if you will not be using the sample images, as it includes important specifications and tips.

### Logo/ID Image Design

This section provides instructions for creating a logo and agency identification image as shown in the sample graphic in the templates. In order to work with the sample image provided in the Template Kit and to use the following instructions, you will need to have Macromedia’s Fireworks MX 2004 and have intermediate experience in using this software.

Note: Fireworks MX 2004 lets users import files from all major graphics formats and manipulate both vector and bitmap images to quickly create graphics and interactivity. Images can be easily exported to Dreamweaver, Flash and third-party applications.

### Getting Started

Start by opening the Fireworks MX 2004 application. Next open the file “header.png” (header graphic template) located in the Agency Website Template folder titled “sources”. Once the file has opened it should appear as it does below:



First we will begin with designing the logo.

### Logo Size

The logo or seal with agency identification text (labeling the Department, Bureau, Office, etc.) plus the search area, combined should not exceed 760px in width (since all state websites should fit the 800 x 600 screen resolution). Since the default search placement is located in the header along with the logo and sits on top of the background image, it is best to make the logo image less than 400px in width. For example, in the Agency Website Template the sample image is 388px in width.

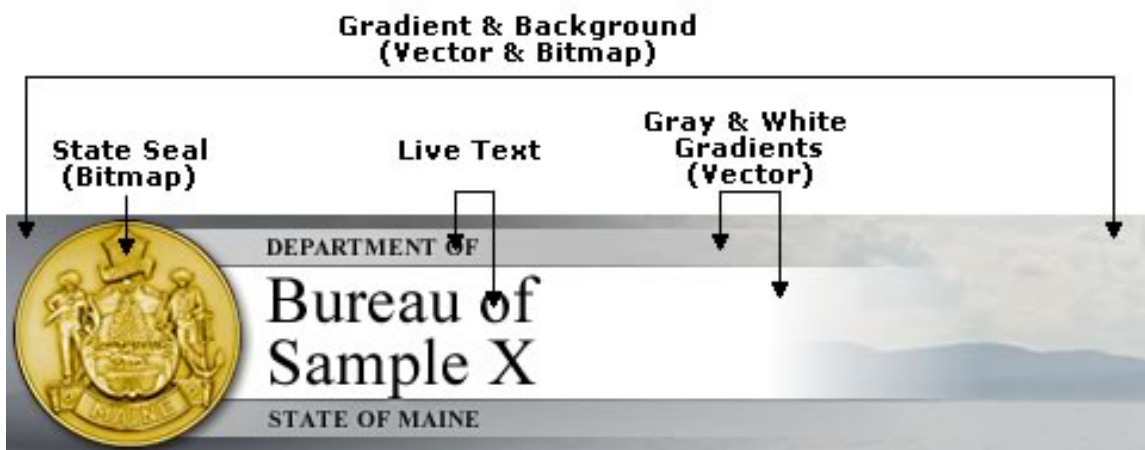


The logo and background image must each be exactly 101px in height. The width of the background will be discussed later.

It is important to note that the black outline around the entire Agency Header is part of the HTML page and not part of the graphics.

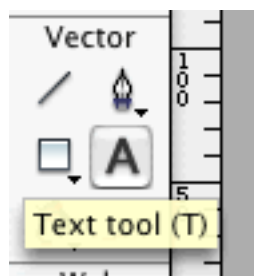
## Logo Layout

The elements that make up the logo are created using layers. There are layers that make up the bitmap image of the state seal, vector parts that make up the light gray and white bars with gradients behind the text and there is also a gradient and bitmap image that comprise the background.

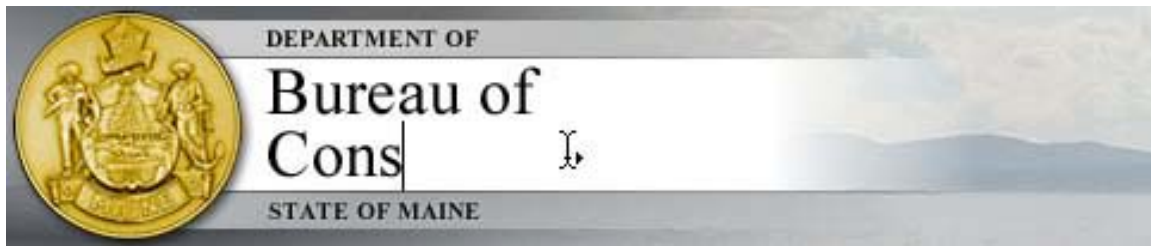


## Adjusting Logo Live Text

Select the text tool in Fireworks from the toolbar, as shown below:



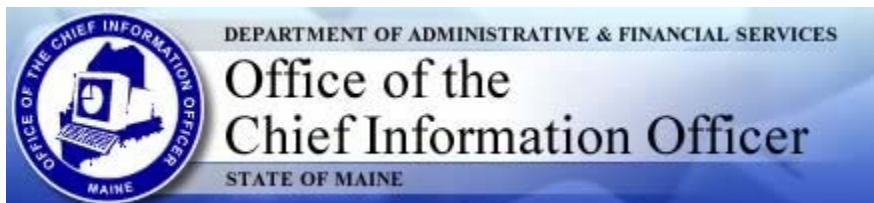
Then put the cursor over the text you would like to change.



If your agency is a Department, leave the DEPARTMENT OF in the top gray gradient, and put the title of the Department in the white gradient section. Try to place the title of the agency on two lines, such as, "Secretary of" on one line and "State" on the next:



If your agency is a Bureau or Office, put the Department name in the top gray gradient and your agency's name in the white gradient:



If the titles are longer than the default gray and white gradients, adjust the gradients to fit.

Once the logo is complete using Fireworks, it is time to add or adjust a background.

## **Background Design**

### **Background Size**

Since the background of the header is a background image that the CSS header.css puts in the background of the header table, the size will vary depending on the type of design that is implemented. There are typically three types of background designs:

- no background
- background align left
- background align right.

### **No Background**

A no background header is a header without a background image. However, there is a background color controlled by the header.css file that will need to be adjusted to match your logo

design. The following header is an example of one that has a logo, no background image, but has a background color:



Behind the logo there is a blue color translated hexidecimally as #000099 or shorter form #009. Since we wanted the blue color in this header to extend all the way across the header the background color is set to: #009. See the header.css file code below:

```
#awt-header {  
  background: #009;  
}
```

It is important to note that all header backgrounds require a background color to be set in the header.css file.

## Background Align Left

The Agency Website Template comes with the header background set to “Background Align Left”. Since the background falls behind the logo and extends across the entire header, the background image is set to align left (since align left is the default position of a background image, the CSS declaration is optional).

As discussed earlier, it is important that the logo image and the search box area combined do not exceed 760px. The background image, however, must exceed 760px. Actually a 1600px background is best. This is due to the fact that user screen resolutions will differ from one user to the next. Some may have resolution set to 800px by 600px, 1024px by 768px, or even as high as 1600px by 1200px, therefore it makes sense to make the background as wide as the largest possible user screen resolution setting.

If the background image you selected is smaller than 1600px in width, a gradient fade from the background image to the background color is necessary. In the Agency Website Template the header background image is only 1524px in width, therefore, it requires the used of a gradient fade. In the template the fade goes from the background image to white. White or #FFF is the background color value set in the header.css file.



You will notice if you expand and contract your browser window with the Agency Website Template index.html page open, that the search and site map in the header moves back and forth across the background. You will also notice that one of the features of the background image is that it fills the background as the browser is enlarged and disappears when made smaller.

## Background Align Right

In most cases background align left looks best and works best for most designs, however, there are times when background align right is the best fit.



In the SOS example design above, it was decided that placing the Secretary of State's name in the header and allowing it to move back and forth under the search and site map would be a nice feature. Therefore the background align right design was implemented.

Since the background will be aligned to the right and the logo is on the left, the space between the two will increase and decrease as the browser window is resized from small to large or large to small. In this design a background color and fade to background gradient color of white worked best. Another background color and fade to background gradient color can also work for a “background align right” design.

In the “background align right” design, the logo and background images combined should not exceed 760px in width. If their combined width does exceed 760px, they will overlap each other at the smallest screen resolution setting of 800px by 600px.

## Backgrounds and Search/Site Map Formatting

Since a background image can vary in color, lightness and darkness, the text styling in the search and site map link may need to be adjusted. For some backgrounds the search label and the site map link colors and weight (normal or bold) may need to be adjusted for best visibility. There are not absolute rules in deciding what is best, however, the color of the label and link should follow one of the following three options:

### Background Align Right & White Backgrounds

```
/* CSS Document */
/* Start of Header */
#awt-header {
    background: #FFF url(../images/header_agency_logo_bg.jpg) top
    right no-repeat;
}
#awt-searchForm #awt-search-label {
    color: #000;
    font-weight: normal;
}
#awt-searchForm a {
    color: #06C;
    font-weight: normal;
}
#awt-searchForm a:visited {
    color: #666;
}
#awt-searchForm a:hover {
    color: #C30;
}
/* End of Header */
```

### Background Align Left & Light Backgrounds

```
/* CSS Document */
/* Start of Header */
#awt-header {
    background: #FFF url(../images/header_agency_logo_bg.jpg) no-
    repeat;
}
#awt-searchForm #awt-search-label {
    color: #000;
    font-weight: bold;
}
#awt-searchForm a {
    color: #06C;
    font-weight: bold;
}
#awt-searchForm a:visited {
    color: #666;
}
#awt-searchForm a:hover {
    color: #C30;
}
/* End of Header */
```

## Background Align Left & Dark Backgrounds

```
/* CSS Document */
/* Start of Header */
#awt-header {
    background: #FFF url(../images/header_agency_logo_bg.jpg) no-
repeat;
}
#awt-searchForm #awt-search-label {
    color: #FFF;
    font-weight: bold;
}
#awt-searchForm a {
    color: #06C;
    font-weight: bold;
}
#awt-searchForm a:visited {
    color: #666;
}
#awt-searchForm a:hover {
    color: #C30;
}
/* End of Header */
```

Backgrounds that have colors that make reading any of the link states difficult should be either white (#FFF) in the link, hover, and visited states, or black (#000) in the link, hover, and visited states.

## Quick Reference – Getting Started

---

1. **Download the Template Kit.**
2. **Open the zip file.**

Be sure to extract all the files and make sure you have the following files and in the correct folders:

  - /website\_template/css/ folder:
    - custom.css
    - index.css
    - general.css
    - header.css
    - awt\_blue.css and the other color style sheets
  - /website\_template/images/ folder:
    - header\_agency\_logo.jpg
    - header\_agency\_logo\_bg.jpg
  - /website\_template/inner/ folder:
    - index.htm – example of a first level inner page, includes data table examples
  - /website\_template/innerSecond/ folder:
    - index.htm – example of a second level page
  - /website\_template/innerThird/ folder:
    - index.htm – example of a third level page
  - /website\_template/index.htm – home page template
  - /sources/ folder - the source image for the header graphic
3. **Set up a development site.**

Create a new subdirectory within your current site called something like “testsite” or “newsite”. This will be your development area. Note: your development site won’t be picked up by search engines as long as not linked from live site, so there’s no need to worry about someone stumbling across it.
4. **Save a copy of the templates somewhere as a backup.**
5. **Edit your Dreamweaver Preferences to turn on XHTML.**
6. **Map out your site architecture, restructuring as needed to improve your navigation.**

Decide what will be your Primary Navigation and what will go in the Top Toolbar. Create an outline of at least the top two or three levels of your site, listing all pages and where they will be placed within the site structure.
7. **Create the file structure in your test directory by setting up your sub-folders.**

Generally you will create a sub-folder for each primary navigation category, so that your folder structure matches your site content structure. You will also have an “images” folder and a “css” folder. All folder names should be lower case and should not include spaces (use a dash or underscore to separate two words if necessary; keep names short). Note: Be sure to copy the /css/ and /images/ files from the Template Kit into your development site. The other sub-folders from the Template Kit do not need to be copied into your site; they are just examples.
8. **Customize the templates for your site.**
  - a. Decide whether you will use Dreamweaver’s templating feature or not.
  - b. Select your color scheme and change the index.css file accordingly
  - c. Create your Agency Header. Don’t forget the ALT text.
  - d. Start with the Home Page, then do an inner page template.
  - e. Customize the search URL and label
  - f. Put in Top Navigation Toolbar links
  - g. Edit the Primary Navigation heading if necessary
  - h. Put in Primary Navigation links
  - i. Edit footer links if necessary

9. **Start building pages!** Work on one section at a time.



## Quick Reference – Creating a New Page

---

Each time you create a new page in your site, there are certain things in the template you will need to update.

1. Save the page with clear file name into appropriate place in your site's file structure.
2. Edit the page title ("Site Name: Page Name").
3. Add description and keywords to meta-tags if desired.
4. Adjust left navigation or top navigation to change the current page/category's link to active state.
5. Edit the breadcrumb trail to match the current page's location and name.
6. Add the page heading in the content area (h1).
7. Add the right column or remove the right column to the content area if needed.
8. Add page content to content area.
9. Adjust page content: add subheadings, lists, etc as needed. Remove any font tags.
10. Add photos or imagery if needed, and ALT text.
11. Save the page.
12. Test the page.
13. Upload the page.
14. Test the page again.

## Quick Reference – Navigation Styling

---

### ***Top Navigation Toolbar***

Normal link state

```
<a href="linkhere">Contact Us</a>
```

Active link state

```
<span class="awt-on">Contact Us</span>
```

### ***Primary Navigation Toolbar***

This is only for quick reference. You will need to read the full documentation to use the navigation correctly.

“Normal state” means that the linked page is not the current page or category.

“Active state” means that the linked page is the current page or current parent category.

Normal Menu Link

```
<li><a href="yourlink">About Us</a></li>
```

Active Menu Link

```
<li><a href="yourlink" class="on">About Us</a></li>
```